

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 17, 2020

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20220

The Honorable Jovita Carranza
Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street SW
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Secretary Mnuchin and Administrator Carranza,

We write to you today concerning oversight of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). This program has provided a vital lifeline to millions of small businesses across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but many more, especially minority-owned small businesses, have been left behind. As a bipartisan and bicameral group of our colleagues have stressed to you in recent weeks, additional oversight measures are needed to ensure that this \$659 billion program is being administered effectively and delivering aid to the businesses who truly need it. We were pleased to see your June 15, 2020 tweet acknowledging that a discussion needs to be had regarding transparency. As part of these discussions, we urge you to immediately disclose information on all PPP loans for businesses with multiple employees in a format as similar as possible to existing disclosures of SBA 7(a) loans. Although we hear your concerns about business confidentiality, we note that the PPP Loan Application Form informs borrowers that certain information about their business and loan, including the business name and loan amount, is subject to automatic disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The immediate release of this information would therefore not impose any unexpected burdens on these business owners.

We are also greatly concerned that the SBA has not followed the intentions of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to prioritize assistance to small businesses in rural and economically disadvantaged markets and those owned by minorities, women, and veterans. As has been widely reported, the “first come, first served” approach prevented many of these businesses from receiving assistance from the first tranche of PPP funding, and many lenders have not collected the demographic data that would allow the SBA, Congress, and the public to determine the effectiveness of the PPP in serving these markets. The SBA should immediately act to require the collection of demographic data on the PPP loan forgiveness application as well as in all new PPP loan applications. This demographic information should also be disclosed along with the other PPP loan information to inform congressional oversight efforts to determine the effectiveness of the program in addressing the needs of these historically disadvantaged small businesses.

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated all kinds of small businesses across the country, but, as you well know, minority-owned businesses have been especially hard hit and have had more difficulty in accessing the PPP. As Congress, Treasury, and the SBA continue to combat the economic downturn, we look forward to working together with you to implement strong oversight measures to ensure that this unprecedented program is helping all small businesses as intended by Congress. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Wexton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jennifer Wexton
Member of Congress

OTHER SIGNATORIES:

Cindy Axne
Member of Congress

Ami Bera
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Sean Casten
Member of Congress

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Jim Cooper
Member of Congress

Val Demings
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Denny Heck
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Ann McLane Kuster
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Gregory W. Meeks
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Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
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Jerrold Nadler
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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David Price
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Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress

David Scott
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José E. Serrano
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
Member of Congress